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Pakistan: Prospects for the Zia Government

An Intelligence Assessment

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Pakistan: Prospects for the Zia Government

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An Intelligence Assessment

*Information available as of 15 December 1980
has been used in the preparation of this report.*

This assessment was written by [redacted] Southwest Asia Analytic Center, Near East-South Asia Division, Office of Political Analysis, with contributions from the Offices of Economic Research and Strategic Research. It has been coordinated with the National Intelligence Officer for Near East-South Asia and with the Offices of Economic Research and Strategic Research. [redacted]

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Questions and comments are welcome and should be directed to the Chief, Southwest Asia Analytic Center, Near East-South Asia Division, OPA,

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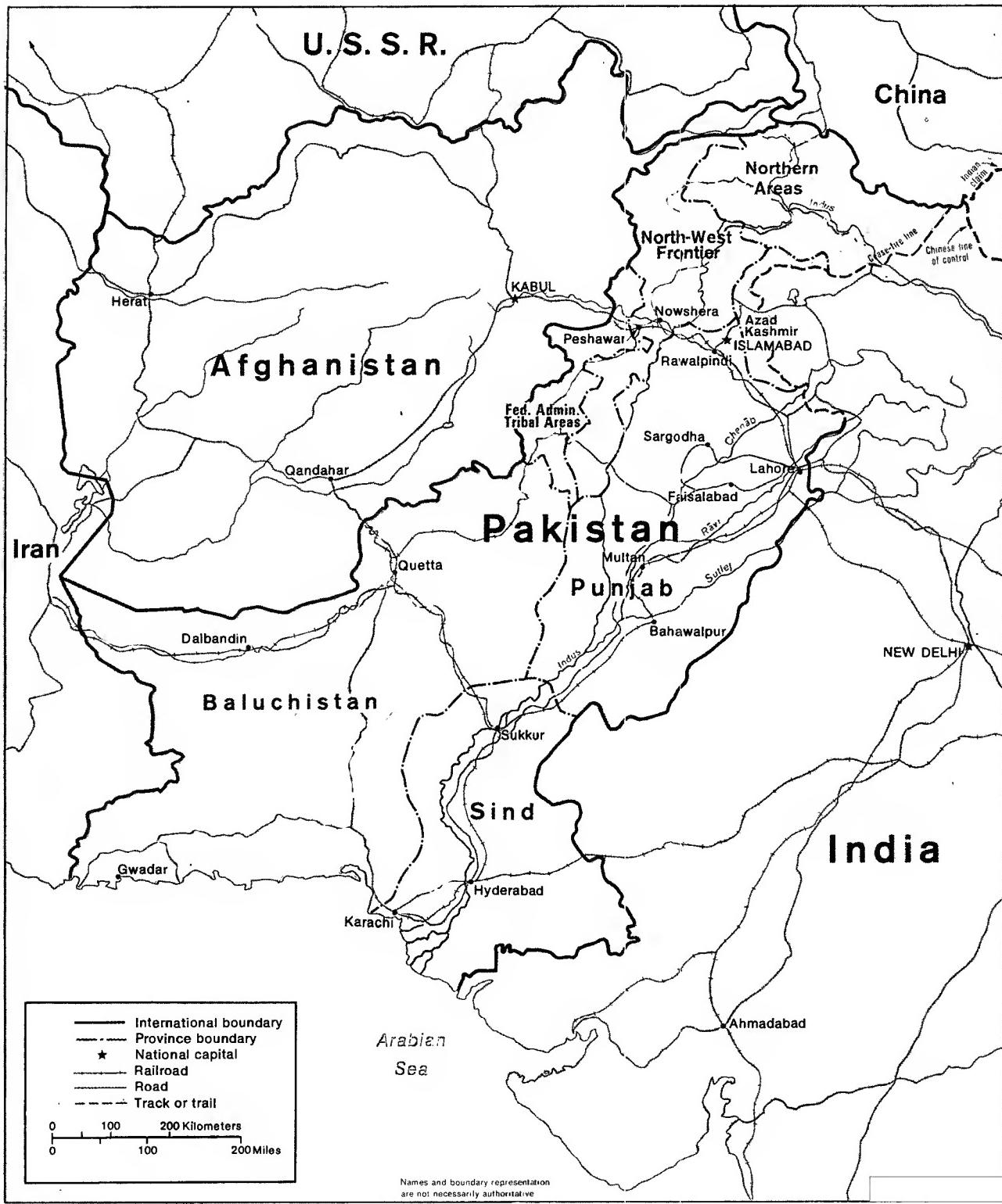
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**Pakistan:
Prospects for the
Zia Government**

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Key Judgments

President Zia has strengthened his authority over the Army and is taking steps to consolidate his control over the bureaucracy. His regime has benefited from the general improvement of the economy during his rule, and he has been careful to keep martial law from becoming too repressive.

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Although Zia has handled potentially inflammable domestic tensions with skill, he does not have widespread popular support. He has been unable either to attract credible political leaders into his government or to establish the legitimacy of his regime in the eyes of most Pakistanis. His regime is vulnerable to mass civil discontent, and such an eventuality cannot be entirely ruled out.

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As Chief Martial Law Administrator, Zia rules Pakistan through the Army, but day-to-day decisions are made by Zia in consultation with a small group of military and civilian advisers. Zia needs the Army's concurrence for major policy decisions. It is unlikely the Army would remove him unless there was a serious breakdown in public order.

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The Army is a cohesive force and appears to recognize the dangers to its unity and discipline posed by prolonged military rule. But it is reluctant to return the government to civilian control. It lacks confidence in party politicians and believes the Pakistan People's Party would damage Pakistan's fundamental interests by moving against the Army and acquiescing in Soviet aims in Afghanistan.

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The opposition, though normally fragmented, has recently joined to demand Zia's resignation, an end to martial law, and elections within three months. Lacking a powerful leader and a "gut" issue, however, and restrained by the Soviet threat in Afghanistan, the opposition is hamstrung by its divisions and cannot by itself mount a major challenge to Zia.

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The Pakistan People's Party of the late Prime Minister Bhutto is the most popular political force in the country, but it is divided between radicals and moderates and lacks effective leadership. Even if it succeeded in taking power, it would probably soon be split by factional struggles.

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Foreign threats dominate the political landscape in Pakistan. The military leaders fear that Pakistan will be the next victim of a Soviet drive to gain strategic access to South Asia and the Persian Gulf if Moscow consolidates its hold on Afghanistan. Even short of a fullscale Soviet attack, they fear

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potential Soviet subversion among Pakistan's restless border tribes and worry that major border incursions would raise serious questions in Pakistan about the government's ability to govern and defend the country. Most Pakistanis deeply distrust India and suspect that Moscow and New Delhi are collaborating to put pressure on Islamabad.

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These threats, the military believes, can be offset by a stronger security relationship with the United States. Islamabad's best hope is for an ironclad US commitment against all comers, Indian as well as Soviet, guaranteed access to modern weapons, and some joint military planning with US Indian Ocean forces. Pakistan is reassessing its foreign policy and probably will seek stronger ties with the United States. Some influential circles, however, argue that the United States is unreliable and advocate continued nonalignment, dependence on moderate Arab countries, friendship with Iran, and a degree of accommodation with the USSR.

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Zia, who believes the Afghan insurgency can go on indefinitely if properly supported, will continue to oppose the Soviet presence in Afghanistan. Islamabad may have to reconsider its Afghanistan policy, however, if it perceives a decisive shift in domestic public opinion on the issue, or if it fails to receive support and security guarantees from the United States that it considers adequate. The roughly 1.5 million Afghan refugees are an additional pressure on Islamabad. Pakistan might discontinue diplomatic efforts to obtain Soviet withdrawal and, if severely pressed, could agree to a long-term Soviet presence in Afghanistan.

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The most significant achievement of the Zia ul-Haq regime since it came to power in July 1977 has been its ability to survive serious challenges and achieve a degree of consolidation unexpected by most observers. In the three years since he overthrew Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Zia has managed to bolster his position in the Army, revive a stagnant economy, defuse potentially explosive domestic political unrest caused by the execution of Bhutto and growing sectarian tensions, and achieve a measure of international attention as a spokesman for the Islamic world.

Major problems remain. The Zia government has been unable to win more than grudging tolerance from most Pakistanis, and political party leaders continue to press for elections and a return to party rule. Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party is still widely popular and would probably win control of the National Assembly if an election were held. But the military leaders, quite apart from fearing retribution for the execution of Bhutto, will not willingly allow a party to return to power that they believe would accommodate to Soviet aims in Afghanistan and would attempt to undermine the political and economic power of the armed forces at home. Abroad, Pakistan's chronic insecurity, historically aroused by India, has been enhanced by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

Zia has so far dealt skillfully with these problems. On the domestic front he has engaged the party politicians in a dialogue on a return to party rule, thus emphasizing their divisions and competing interests. Internationally, Zia has been able—publicly at least—to keep his distance from the United States and cover Pakistan's aims with the protective camouflage of Islamic brotherhood and nonalignment. With India, Zia has kept channels open to Prime Minister Gandhi and has not allowed the two countries' historically hostile relationship to deteriorate further. On Afghanistan he has managed a delicate balancing act, aiding the insurgents while offering to negotiate with the Soviet Union through a united front of Muslim states.



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Pakistani President Zia

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Background

Despite Zia's evident ability to survive and the apparent crystallizing of his regime, Pakistan's long-term survival arouses serious doubts. It is the only post-colonial state to suffer permanent dismemberment—the breaking off of East Pakistan in 1971—and strong regional undercurrents flow in what remains of Pakistan. It is not inconceivable that a combination of internal and external pressures will once again subject Pakistan to enormous political stress, perhaps this time leading to total disintegration. Although this prospect is neither immediate nor inevitable, Pakistan's problems are fundamental and will require imaginative leadership and luck if they are to be overcome—two qualities not found in abundance during Pakistan's short history.

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Perhaps most basic to Pakistan's difficulties has been its failure to achieve either true nationhood or a viable political order. The country's history has shown that a

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common adherence to Islam is not enough to replace regional and cultural loyalties with a broader and more compelling nationalism. The elites that envisioned and founded Pakistan were narrowly based, both socially and regionally. Many groups either were incorporated into Pakistan without their consent or, having joined in a spate of religious enthusiasm, found themselves underrepresented in the increasingly dominant institutions of the state—the higher bureaucracy and the Army, both of which were almost exclusively staffed by Punjabis, Pathans, and refugee notables from India. Regional and social groups that did not have access to the institutions of real power sought to strengthen the national legislature as a center of opposition to executive government and saw the reluctance of the Army and civil service to accept legislative dominance as proof of Punjabi-Pathan aims to run the state in their own interest.

The failure to solve this fundamental problem early in Pakistan's history left the country without a true national consensus and without an acceptance of those basic rules of political order which govern participation, enable competing claims to be compromised, and allow governments to be made and unmade according to clear and accepted procedures. In these circumstances, competing parties and electoral politics have tended to aggravate rather than efface social and regional divisions, thus confounding national integration and leading to recurrent constitutional breakdown.

In general, politics in Pakistan have fluctuated between two competing and mutually hostile patterns. The first of these is party government and is exemplified in the periods of rule by the Muslim League of Pakistan's founder Muhammad Ali Jinnah and later that of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Both Bhutto and Jinnah were secular nationalists who had profound faith in the law and constitutional processes that the political elite and educated classes had inherited from the British. Both men were able to arouse deep popular support for radical reform and to establish their popular mandates by linking together a large number of social and interest groups in a broader party identity.

But parliamentary rule has not worked well in Pakistan. National elections were held in 1970 and 1977, but on both occasions agitation by the losing parties led to major civil instability. Parliamentarism has been further eroded in Pakistan because ruling regimes—including civilian governments—have not allowed opposition groups to organize and function unhindered. Another problem has been that weak party organizations have been unable to resist fracturing in the struggle for pelf and patronage. Once in power, neither Jinnah nor Bhutto was able to make party government work, and both soon realized that they had to co-opt and control the instruments of executive government. For Bhutto, especially, this meant a growing dependence on groups—particularly the landlords and the bureaucracy—that he had initially denounced and displaced and whose interests he had severely damaged in his reforms.

Thus, parliamentary government has tended to decay into executive government under the Army, the second and so far dominant pattern of politics in Pakistan. The tradition of executive government rests on the strongest and most developed institutions inherited from the British Empire—the Army and the civil service. The British drew on the executive-based Mughal imperial system, including its tradition of mediative kingship. Mediation, not mobilization, is the customary mode of day-to-day politics in Muslim South Asia. At the local—as well as the national—level, leadership is exercised through mediation within and between tribes, lineage brotherhoods, patron-client networks, and religious orders.

Executive government in Pakistan, particularly under its military leaders, Gen. Iskander Mirza, Ayub Khan, Yahya Khan, and Zia ul-Haq, has been a "brokered system" in which the leader is a mediator who balances contending elites. The stability of this system has depended on a stalemate between many opposing factions and has been directly threatened when the emergence of a dominant political party led by a charismatic figure has upset the balance. It has also been threatened—as Ayub Khan learned—by a failure of "mediatorship," which can happen if the leader attempts to build up a personal base of power or if he uses his position for personal or family benefit.

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The conflict between the legislative and executive principles of government and the deeper struggle between opposed and powerful social groups, which has prevented the development of a national consensus, also cast a shadow over Pakistan's external affairs. With its internal divisions, Pakistan has never felt sure of its place in the world, especially because it has always believed that India is finally—and implacably—opposed to its existence. Pakistan has, therefore, consistently sought to involve a protecting power on its side in the subcontinent to provide it with the means to defend itself and allow it time to strengthen its polity. But while these "alliances," first with the United States and later with China, brought Pakistan important military and economic aid, they did not provide lasting security or enable Pakistan to maintain its territorial integrity during the East Pakistan crisis. The emergence of Bangladesh showed that Pakistan's fundamental weakness in foreign affairs was its domestic politics. The inability to manage the domestic processes of national integration has meant a reduced capacity to resist outside penetration.

This remains the case today, for ethnic and linguistic consciousness—particularly in Baluchistan and Sind—continue to foster separatist tendencies. This comes at a time when the international environment has grown more threatening for Pakistan. India, the historic enemy across a lowland border, continues to build up its military power and refuses to discuss the disputed state of Kashmir. In the north, the Pakistanis believe that the Soviet Union has made perhaps a decisive move in the "great game," sending its forces along ancient invasion routes across the Hindu Kush Mountains and turning the Durand Line into what Pakistan now calls a de facto Soviet border. Pakistan finds itself caught between two stronger powers, both of which can exploit minority separatism inside Pakistan. The memory of Indo-Soviet sponsorship of Bangladesh is painfully fresh, and Pakistan's leaders believe that such a collaboration might resume to neutralize Pakistan and turn it into a weak buffer between India and the Soviet Union. The Army is acutely aware that a Pakistan transformed into a weak buffer would lead to the virtual demilitarization of the central government; it believes this would fatally weaken the one institution capable of holding the country together.

The Zia Regime:

Problem of Legitimacy

The Zia regime began on 5 July 1977, when Army Chief of Staff Gen. Mohammad Zia ul-Haq toppled the government of Prime Minister Bhutto. The bloodless coup brought to an end a violent three-month-long campaign, led essentially by the urban middle class, to declare the 1977 elections invalid because of alleged rigging by Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party.

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Initially General Zia promised early elections and a return to civilian rule. Pressures from anti-Bhutto constituencies in the Army, bureaucracy, and middle class, however, as well as discoveries by Army investigators of extensive wrongdoing by Bhutto and his cohorts, led Zia away from his policy of moderating political developments to one of attempting to dominate the political process and effect major social and economic reforms. To succeed in these goals Zia had to neutralize Bhutto and the PPP. The means at hand were charges of conspiracy to commit murder which the government placed against Bhutto and four confederates. Zia proceeded with the trial of Bhutto and eventually approved his execution after Bhutto's appeal to the Supreme Court was turned down.

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Despite evidence of Bhutto's guilt, many Pakistanis believe that Bhutto was either framed or tried unfairly. The fact that the four judges who voted to uphold the death sentence were all Punjabis, while the three who voted to acquit were not, greatly exacerbated the sense of grievance against Punjabi domination in Bhutto's home province of Sind. The execution, along with consistent efforts to weaken and harass the PPP, have made Bhutto a martyr and helped revive the broad popularity of his party.

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The constitutionality of Zia's assumption of power and his position as Chief Martial Law Administrator were upheld by the Supreme Court on the basis of the "doctrine of necessity." The court, however, has placed some restraints on the scope of the military government. It affirmed the right of superior civilian courts to review actions of the martial law authorities, and it appeared to make its acquiescence to martial law contingent upon Zia's implementing his promise of early elections and return to civil government under the 1973 constitution.

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President Zia has clearly gone beyond these limitations since the court's decision in 1978. He has twice postponed elections—the second time indefinitely—and in May 1980 he amended the constitution to make military courts superior to all civilian courts. Efforts to test the constitutionality of these actions, including a court action by the chief of the Tehrik-i-Istiqlal party, Asghar Khan, have been entangled in Zia's policy of frequently transferring judges to prevent any bench from completing this kind of political case. It is unlikely that any court will adjudicate such political claims as long as Zia's grip on power remains firm. Nonetheless, the charge that the Chief Martial Law Administrator has gone beyond the bounds of constitutionality could haunt the regime in a future period of instability.

The Zia regime has not been able to establish its legitimacy in the eyes of most educated Pakistanis, but it has achieved a measure of tolerance. Open opposition has been poorly organized, low-key, sporadic, and usually confined to single-interest groups like lawyers, Shias, and students. There are a number of possible reasons for this:

- The enforcement of martial law has been firm enough to control the politicians, but not repressive enough to stimulate a violent reaction.
- Opposition parties are divided and demoralized and can offer no contender who has broad enough support to challenge Zia's rule.
- There is not at the moment a "gut" issue around which people can be mobilized. The regime has been able to impose a degree of economic discipline unknown since the Ayub period. The economy has grown at better than 6 percent per year, and inflation has been held to tolerable levels.
- Zia retains the respect, if not the love, of most of his countrymen. He has performed shrewdly as a mediator, a position that requires a reputation for piety and evenhandedness rather than the "charismatic" qualities of the political party leader.
- Some observers have noted a growing sense of political maturity in Pakistan, a country that, within less

than a decade, has been through two countrywide mass movements and a civil war that spilled across national frontiers. Pakistanis have a more realistic appreciation of how much economic damage mass movements can do.

- Because Pakistan faces not only its traditional enemy India, but also the Soviets in Afghanistan and the difficult dilemmas of the Iran-Iraq conflict, most Pakistanis do not see this as a propitious time to challenge or change the national leadership.

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Nonetheless, virtually all Pakistanis consider the martial law regime to be temporary and support a return to popularly elected civilian government. Support for Zia rests, in a certain degree, on the public's perception that the regime is moving—however slowly—toward some form of civilian rule. Should his domestic opponents perceive that Zia is losing his hold, opposition to his regime could coalesce rapidly, forcing him either to crack down hard or make major political concessions.

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Regime Power Relationships

Zia came to power in Pakistan as the weakest in the intermittent line of Pakistani military rulers. Originally appointed by Bhutto, who wanted an undistinguished soldier without political ambition to head the Army, Zia emerged as leader of the coup more by virtue of his position than from a personal desire for power.

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Both his authority over subordinates and his influence with other coupmakers was weak, and early evidence of poor planning and internal disagreements initially undermined confidence that his leadership would last.

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In the past year, however, Zia has been able to consolidate more power in his own hands and has emerged as the dominant figure in the government. In March a number of officers, including a retired major general, were arrested on charges of plotting a coup against Zia. Faced with unrest in the Army and continued disunity at the top levels of the regime, Zia moved to

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solidify his position while dispersing the power of his military colleagues. He retained three of them as provincial governors, but transferred their troop commands to a group of freshly promoted lieutenant generals.

Only Lt. Gen. Rahimuddin Khan, who is related by marriage to Zia, was allowed to retain both his positions as governor of Baluchistan and commander of the Army's Second Corps. Others who had clashed with Zia were reassigned to high—but relatively powerless—staff positions. The subsequent resignations of Lt. Gen. Faiz Ali Chishti and Ghulam Hassan Khan, and the appointment of Lt. Gen. Mohammad Iqbal Khan to be chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff indicated that Zia had gained the upper hand in the reorganization of the regime's top echelon.

Zia ul-Haq: An Emerging Leader

Once diffident and dependent on his military peers, Zia has matured into a tough, self-confident leader who is clearly in charge and who intends to impose a more Islamic way of life on his countrymen. His ability to manipulate politicians, to settle potentially inflammable tensions between Sunnis and Shias, and to gain world recognition as a Muslim spokesman and a courageous opponent of Soviet aims in Afghanistan bring into focus a man who is somewhat more complex and much more politically skilled than was earlier assumed. He is careful not to take positions from which he must back down, and he is adept at compromising and accommodating diverse and opposed demands. Yet he neither shrinks from making difficult decisions nor vacillates once he has made them.

As no other leader in his country's short history, Zia has promoted the Islamic basis of Pakistani nationalism, a predisposition that springs from his genuine religious devotion. He accepts the principle, most often enunciated by the fundamentalist Jama'at-i-Islami party, that Islam is a "complete code of life" which guides Muslims in all realms of human activity—political and economic, as well as moral and social. Zia's piety and his respect for the egalitarian and social goals of Islam probably give him substantial support among the urban lower middle class, which is obscured by the bitter criticism directed at Zia and Islamization by the more Westernized groups he has displaced.

President Zia is not a "Mahdist" (messianic) figure, nor one who sees himself as divinely ordained to achieve a religious mission. An element of pragmatism marks his religious views. Although he approaches matters of religious interpretation conservatively, he accepts the doctrine of *ijtihad*, which allows Muslims to apply the basic injunctions of Islam in light of changing circumstances. His pursuit of Islamization stems, at least in part, from his belief that only Islam can ultimately provide Pakistan with a national identity and ethos. Although Zia seems to be feeling his way rather than operating from a detailed blueprint, it is clear that he sees Islamic reform as a way of infusing his countrymen with a sense of order and discipline and a means of remodeling social institutions badly eroded during the perfervid Bhutto years.

Zia occasionally reads more into events than facts warrant, but he is a clear-eyed realist on most matters. He is aware that a long political involvement might erode the cohesion and professionalism of the armed forces and agrees that the country must eventually return to civilian rule. At the moment, however, when Pakistan is threatened as never before, he is more concerned that inept or irresponsible politicians would lead the country to disaster or that an election campaign could arouse uncontrollable sectional, sectarian, or class passions. Hence, he has refused to become pinned down to a schedule for civilianization and seems disposed to delay any move toward elections pending further "reforms" and a less dangerous international environment.

Zia has avoided becoming isolated as a leader and is aware that strong opposition to him exists. Debate and criticism are relatively open at the top levels of the regime and in the Army, and Zia has been careful to maintain contact with old friends and outsiders, some of whom are sharp critics of his handling of events. In addition, the President travels frequently to keep in touch with a wide variety of Pakistanis throughout the nation. He is candid about the fact that his authority springs from his position as Chief of the Army Staff and recognizes that any effort to build up a personal or party following outside the Army would probably bring pressure from within the Army for his resignation as Army Chief.

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Decisionmaking Groups

Pakistan is governed by a Martial Law Administration that superimposes Army and other ad hoc lines of authority over regular government and bureaucratic structures. Zia runs the MLA and government ministries through his position as Chief of the Army Staff. The decisionmaking process, particularly on national security matters, is closed, highly centralized, and restricted to a small group of military colleagues and civilian advisers. No formal body with clear executive responsibilities can be singled out, and Zia appears to select his advisers on any given issue on the basis of personal trust rather than function. Some matters Zia appears to handle alone. One of these is Islamization, which is very much his own effort. Another is the extremely sensitive matter of nuclear development. Zia appears to make the key decisions on technical nuclear matters in consultation with his nuclear advisers, most prominently Munir Ahmad Khan, chairman of the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission. More general aspects of nuclear policy, however, are more widely discussed in the top echelons of the Army and regime.

sensitive issues like the border situation, refugees, and the Soviet presence in Afghanistan and has developed a good personal relationship with Foreign Minister Agha Shahi. As Zia's main contact with the politicians, he had a major role in settling the difficult Shia-government dispute over the payment of Islamic wealth taxes. He is probably privy to the most sensitive national security and nuclear policy discussions. [redacted]

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Two civilians are also close to Zia. Ghulam Ishaq Khan holds, among other portfolios, the Finance Ministry and is regarded as a policymaker and administrator of outstanding ability. He enjoys major influence on domestic affairs and has been involved with nuclear issues since the Bhutto years. The fact that he is a career civil servant gives him great stature with the bureaucracy, the "steel frame" that extends down to the village level and without which Pakistan could not be governed. The Finance Ministry traditionally has been the most powerful Cabinet post in Pakistan, and Ishaq has been described as a de facto Prime Minister under Zia. [redacted]

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Two fairly discrete decisionmaking groups can be discerned around Zia. The first is a core group of close advisers that figures in the day-to-day running of the government. Most important are two lieutenant generals whose influence has mounted as Zia's fellow coupmakers have resigned or suffered a diminution of influence. Akhtar Abdul Rehman Khan, an artillery officer, is a senior lieutenant general who heads the interservices intelligence functions of the government, including aid to the Afghan insurgents, domestic political intelligence, and intelligence on attitudes and opinion in the armed forces. His effectiveness is essential if the regime is to control domestic opposition, and his loyalty to Zia is crucial if the latter is to avoid falling victim to a possible coup from within the Army. [redacted]

Foreign Minister Agha Shahi, a career Foreign Service officer and diplomatic notable since the Yahya regime, is a close adviser to Zia by virtue of his foreign affairs expertise and grasp of the workings of the diplomatic machinery. A master of diplomatic maneuver and nuance, Shahi has starred brilliantly in the Islamic Conference and in promoting Zia as a spokesman for the Islamic world. His influence is limited, however, largely because he is not completely trusted by the military leaders, who dislike his diplomatic dissimulation and believe Shahi has sometimes stretched his instructions to the limit. Additionally, Shahi—a Shia—does not deal with Saudi Arabia on bilateral matters and is kept on the periphery of foreign policy questions dealing directly with national security and nuclear development. Policies closely identified with him, however, such as nonalignment, close relations with Iran, rejection of US military aid, and a dependence on moderate Arab states, have recently come under attack inside the government, and it is possible that Shahi would not retain his ministry if Pakistan became more closely aligned to the United States. [redacted]

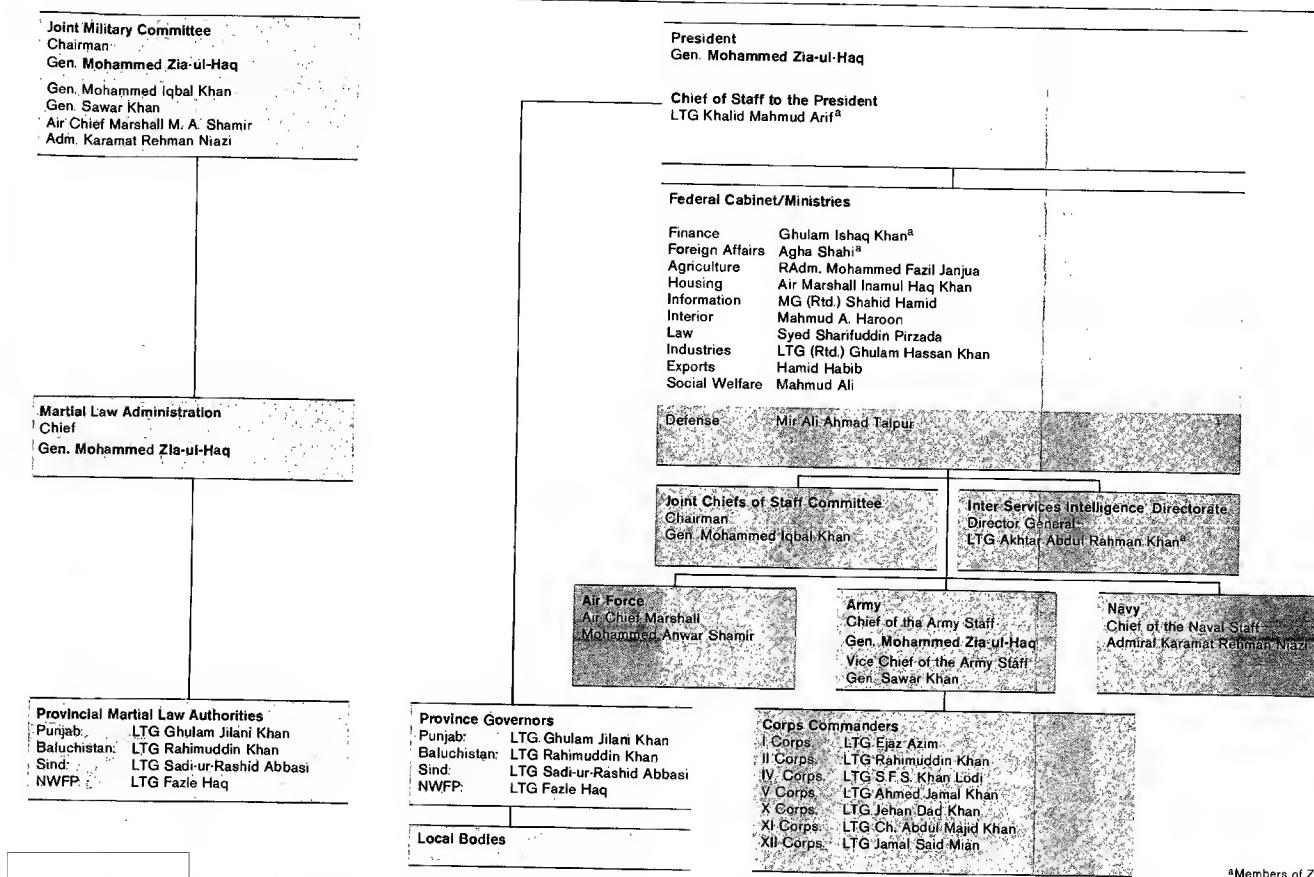
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Khalid Mahmud Arif, the most junior of the lieutenant generals, serves as Chief of Staff to the President. Like Zia a Punjabi and an armored corps officer, Arif is personally close to Zia and appears to have replaced General Chishti as head of the regime's political committee. He has gained stature as a policy spokesman on

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Organization of Zia Regime^aMembers of Zia's "Inner Cabinet"

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On major decisions, such as the one taken in October 1979 to postpone national elections, Zia turns to a somewhat larger circle to help make policy. Today this would include the Army high command, the provincial governors, and the corps commanders. Three generals stand out in this group as most important: Mohammad Iqbal Khan, chief of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee; Sawar Khan, vice chief of the Army Staff; and Rahimuddin Khan, governor of Baluchistan and Second Corps commander. Frequently Zia calls on close associates in this circle to assist him on sensitive national security issues. For example, Zia and a coterie of generals, including Iqbal, have dominated the dialogue with Saudi Arabia on aid and the stationing of two Pakistani armored brigades. Since the departure of Generals Chishti and Ghulam Hassan Khan, who often sided with him against Zia, Iqbal has dealt less with political and more with purely military affairs. Rahimuddin remains a close confidant of Zia and was included along with Akhtar and Arif in the President's entourage during his visit to the United States and Western Europe late last year. There are some who believe Zia is grooming Rahimuddin to be his successor.

Made up of military officers and senior civil servants who have similar social backgrounds, values, and a common stake in preserving the status quo, the leadership in the Zia regime is remarkably homogeneous. As a group it appears to have had little previous foreign affairs experience, although Zia and Generals Akhtar and Arif have proven to be quick learners. Punjabis tend to dominate this ruling group more than in past military governments, while it seems clear that the elite, Westernized values of earlier postpartition generations are giving way to more middle class and parochial attitudes. The most fascinating aspect of this group is their inbred quality and self-protective nature. This tends to contain the vigorous ambition of some and enables the leadership to perpetuate itself and protect its group integrity from real or imagined incursions by outsiders.

The Army

General Zia's position depends ultimately—as he has admitted—on the “support which I get from my own constituency, which is the military.” Together, the Army high command and corps commanders could overrule Zia or, in extraordinary circumstances, force

his retirement from the Army or the presidency. Coup plotting against military rulers is not unknown in Pakistan's history, but command discipline has remained firm and no such conspiracy has gone beyond the preliminary stages before being discovered. It is worth noting, however, that twice military presidents—Ayub Khan in 1969 and Yahya Khan in 1971—have resigned from office when it became clear that they had lost the support of the Army.

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Only a situation such as happened in the Bangladesh crisis of 1971 or a series of incidents that threatened widespread civil disturbances or serious discrediting of the Army would overcome the Army's enormous reluctance to risk disunity by replacing its chief. The Soviets have threatened actions that would discredit the Army's ability to defend the country. A major Soviet-Afghan incursion, however, would not only be strongly opposed, but would most likely unite the country behind the government.

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The more realistic threat to Zia is that of mass civil disobedience or a prolonged breakdown in public order possibly occasioned by Sunni-Shia disturbances, student riots, or clashes between Afghan refugees and Pakistanis. The threat of civil disobedience points to the inherent weakness of any martial law administration. The US Embassy in Islamabad holds that “to be credible and effective, martial law must be enforced; but if enforcement means severe repression and the use of force against ordinary citizens, the reliability of the Army cannot be guaranteed.” The Army would not long prop up an unpopular ruler against an enraged and mobilized citizenry, particularly in Punjab. It would quickly move to protect its interests by replacing Zia with another general who would either seek to maintain the military regime or negotiate an acceptable political settlement with the party leaders.

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Zia does not enjoy the great respect in the Army accorded his most illustrious predecessor, President and Field Marshal Mohammad Ayub Khan. Widespread criticism of his rule is reported among junior officers, some of whom have charged that Zia cares more for his own interests than the Army's; others worry that the Afghan refugees will become a permanent security problem for Pakistan, much like the Palestinians in Lebanon and Jordan.

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Some middle-ranking officers believe that Islamization may be going too far, and several senior officers are reported irritated with General Akhtar—and by implication Zia—for prying into personal drinking habits.

[REDACTED] This kind of irritation is not important by itself, but it could assume more importance if the generals become dissatisfied with Zia on more substantive issues.

Zia well understands the internal politics of the Army and has made himself chief spokesman of the broad middle ground on substantive policy issues. Dissent on policy exists, but so far has been confined to small groups of senior officers or to junior officers. On foreign policy, for example, a few have argued for an accommodation with the Soviet Union on Afghanistan, while others want an aggressive forward policy, including the use of Pakistani troops inside Afghanistan in support of the Islamic insurgents. Most officers, however, support Zia's policy of keeping lines open to the Soviets while demanding Soviet withdrawal, refusing to recognize the Karmal regime, aiding the Afghan insurgents, and reacting with force to Soviet-Afghan incursions.

Much ambivalence exists in the Army about its involvement in politics. Most officers would prefer a return to civilian leadership, though the difficulties of implementing this task are clearly recognized. On the one hand, there are the concerns about an erosion of professional standards and cohesion in the Army, and—since the East Pakistan debacle—few officers have any illusions about the Army's capacity as governor and reformer. On the other hand, most senior officers stress the importance of legitimate and effective political leadership as a prerequisite for civilian control and argue that elections that inflame sectional, sectarian, or class passions are too threatening to the country's integrity. There is also acute concern that "incompetent" politicians will divert resources from the armed forces, thus weakening the only defense against external threats and the primary force holding the state together. Most officers support Zia's glacial

move toward civilianization, his requirement that the next election be nonpartisan, and his search for an institutional mechanism that will give the Army a long-term veto over major foreign and domestic policymaking by future civilian cabinets.

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Domestic Politics

The Zia regime has yet to give Pakistan a clearer political, economic, or institutional shape. Islamization—the effort to restructure public institutions according to Islamic models—is being implemented cautiously and has begun to affect the legal system, banking, taxation, and education. A few interest groups feel threatened—lawyers, women, college teachers, and some students—and have begun to demonstrate against the Martial Law Administration, though a lack of coordination, divergent interests, and the absence of strong popular support have prevented these protests from developing into a countrywide movement. In time, the cumulative effect of Islamization might be more profound and unsettling, particularly if Zia attempts to replace parliamentary government with executive-dominated "Islamic" appointive advisory councils (*Majlis-i-Shura*) as a way of strengthening the central government. One cannot rule out a future coalescing of "anti-Islamization" interest groups and sectional political parties in a broad front that would accuse Zia of misusing Islam to maintain the power of the Army and privileged business, landlord, and bureaucratic elites.

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Zia's relations with political groups have changed since the execution of Bhutto. Initially, Zia was perceived as a temporary ruler—one who would clean the corrupt and criminal elements out of government and hand it back to the politicians through a fair election. As a caretaker ruler, Zia was de facto head of the anti-Bhutto coalition in Pakistan, an amalgam of power blocs—the judiciary, civil service, big business, big landlords, and clergy—that had been damaged or threatened by Bhutto and his authoritarian populism. Politicians, grouped in the Pakistan National Alliance, who represented the interests of these groups, joined Zia's government in late 1978 and stayed long enough to share—at least in the public mind—some of the responsibility for the execution of Bhutto.

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The death of Bhutto and the expectation that his Pakistan People's Party (PPP) would begin to fragment brought renewed pressures from anti-Bhutto politicians for a return to civilian government. The military initially agreed, but changed its mind when the local elections in September 1979 showed the PPP still capable of winning elections at the provincial and national levels. The military decided to postpone the national and provincial elections indefinitely and strengthened martial law by banning political parties and stiffening press censorship. The perception of Zia as a "caretaker" ruler gave way to one of Zia as a reformer who had a mission to Islamize society, who had come to enjoy the exercise of power, and who was not especially anxious to depart. For the traditional power blocs and the middle class, these developments and the regime's decision to curb the authority of the civilian courts were evidence that Zia's rule was beginning to threaten some of the nation's basic political institutions, including the 1973 constitution and the traditionally independent judiciary.

The result has been a weakening of Zia's political base in the past year. The Sunni clergy remain, by and large, strong supporters. Zia has been able to ensure that the "governmentalization" of Islamic wealth taxes enhances rather than erodes the customary social power of the clergy. Additionally, the clergy has gained substantially in stature and income by the establishment of the courts of religious law and the Board of *Ulema* (religious scholar-jurists), a body that Zia promised to treat as his *Majlis-i-Shura* (advisory council) until a more representative body can be formed. Clerical support is an important element in Zia's ability to maintain order because the religious leaders have major political influence with the urban lower middle class, which has provided much of the support for mass movements in the past.

Zia needs to keep up relations with the clergy to protect his right flank. The example of religious revolution in Iran has inspired many Pakistanis, Sunni as well as Shia. Unlike Iran, however, Pakistan lacks a unified religious establishment. Many local heterodox sects of saints and shrines define a parochial religious consciousness for most rural folk, and the more orthodox Islam of the cities is not only divided into the major branches of Islam—Sunni, Shia, and Ismaili—but the Sunni majority is itself split into a variety of historical

and legal schools. This makes it unlikely that a purely religious figure will emerge to lead an Islamic revolution in Pakistan.

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Nonetheless, there are real dangers for Zia in the rise of a more militant Islam. His program of Islamization has politicized religious divisions between Sunnis and Shias. The handling of the recent government-Shia dispute over the payment of religious wealth taxes required great political surefootedness. It is all but certain that pressing ahead with Islamization will raise other contentious issues, any one of which could set off serious sectarian disturbances.

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Some elements on the right believe Zia is proceeding too slowly with Islamization. Some student groups, including the one that planned the attack on the US Embassy in Islamabad a year ago, are prepared to press the government in the streets. Clerics, who often control such groups from behind the scenes, are not united by a desire to unseat Zia and can be expected to contain most student excesses. On the other hand, the emergence of Muslim radical fringe groups, answerable only to themselves and bent on destroying the Army, is a real possibility.

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Other groups in the old anti-Bhutto coalition—landlords, big businessmen, and the urban middle class—have put distance between themselves and Zia, but have not broken with him. Some of Zia's policies—denationalization of industry and probusiness labor policies—are welcomed. It is worth noting that all the elements of the anti-Bhutto coalition share with the military an inordinate concern for political order and a bias against mass political activity. All fear the consequences of politically conscious worker and peasant classes that know they can translate their numbers into political power if another Bhutto emerges. The traditional power blocs want political power to protect their interests, but would rather negotiate a deal for elections with Zia and avoid the streets, fearful that a mass movement would soon be captured by the left. Only if a tide of public opinion began to run strongly against Zia would these groups join in active opposition, and even then they would keep their channels to Zia open.

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So far Zia has not felt sufficiently pressed by opposition elements to reach a political settlement with any political groups. The left has been badly battered by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Traditional leftist strongholds, like the sectional parties among the Pakhtuns and Baluch, have been substantially weakened, and the pro-Moscow left in Punjab and Sind is confused and defensive. Sporadic demonstrations by single issue groups such as lawyers, Shias, and students have occurred in recent months, but Zia has acted skillfully through a combination of firmness and flexibility to dampen any antiregime momentum that might have been building. His sporadic talks with selected political leaders about civilianizing the government appear to be tactical maneuvers designed to protect his rule by dividing the opposition and deflecting political debate into a contest for power and patronage.

Before his trip to the United States and Western Europe in late 1980, and while he was settling potentially explosive government-Shia tensions, Zia reopened a dialogue with political leaders. Negotiations appear to have gone the farthest with Ghulam Mustapha Jatoi, a prominent Sindhi landlord and leader of the moderate wing of the Pakistan People's Party.

Though pressed by many PPP moderates to conclude the deal, Jatoi vacillated, having failed to get the agreement of Bhutto's widow and political heir, and Zia left the country without making the expected announcement about a new civilian cabinet.

Zia has not renewed his contacts with Jatoi. The President returned from abroad apparently convinced that he had finally attained such an overwhelmingly popular position that no political party could shake his resolve to mold the country's system of government as he saw fit. There is some indication, however, that a majority of the Military Council and governors opposed Zia's plan for civilianization and either wanted

to maintain the status quo or insisted that the politicians relinquish their party ties before being appointed to the cabinet. Zia has reverted to suggestions that the new Islamic political system could be built up from the local bodies. He has promised to appoint both a federal advisory council and a federal cabinet to be staffed by community notables respected for their accomplishments, honesty, and piety, but has said that elections under the present circumstances would be "suicidal." He has agreed, however, that a referendum on Islamization might "prove useful" to show that his policies have broad support.

Zia must be careful not to overestimate his support or underestimate that of his opponents. The failure of his talks with Jatoi is only the latest in a series of failures by Zia to keep promises made to politicians, and the President is rapidly losing credibility as a forthright negotiator. Additionally, there are indications that the PPP has begun to shake off its lethargy and may be preparing to raise the level of oppositional activity in the country.

The Pakistan People's Party

The PPP is potentially the most influential political force in Pakistan and would most likely win any national election held today. Its chief rival, the Pakistan National Alliance, which led the movement to unseat Bhutto in 1977, has rapidly declined in popularity and unity and has not found a leader to replace the recently deceased Maulana Mufti Mahmood. Bhutto's charisma and populist program have proven far more enduring in memory than has his ruthlessness. His execution has made him a martyr for the party faithful, and his tomb has become a shrine for the rural peasantry of Sind. The PPP, known as the "poor people's party" throughout Pakistan, retains the loyalty of many of those who voted for it in 1970. Although the party has never developed an effective organization, key elements of the social coalition put together by Bhutto are substantially intact. It remains to be seen, however, if the party will produce a leadership capable of effectively exploiting its latent strength.

Hounded by the martial law authorities and divided by conflicting counsels, the PPP has had great difficulty maintaining its unity and adopting an effective, coherent

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*Nusrat and Benazir Bhutto,
wife and daughter of the late
Prime Minister*



Unclassified photo from Far Eastern Economic Review, 1981 Yearbook. ©

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ent strategy. Nusrat Bhutto—Bhutto's widow and titular head of the party—has only recently begun to emerge from long months of mourning and detention and seems to lack the executive ability and brilliant tactical skill of her husband. Benazir, Bhutto's oldest child, has shown flashes of her father's ability, but has not demonstrated the maturity and vision needed for sustained political leadership. The Bhutto women have had difficulty in controlling the restless ambitions of some in the PPP leadership and have done nothing to revitalize the party or restore its morale. The party generally finds itself on the defensive, reacting to Zia's maneuvers—such as the Zia-Jatoi talks, which almost split the party—rather than setting the pace of politics in Pakistan.

For more than a year after Bhutto's execution, Nusrat—perhaps understandably—remained bent on retribution and unshakably determined not to deal with Zia or cooperate with any party or leader who might have had a hand in her husband's death. Earlier this fall, Benazir's prescription for the country's political condition was that "either the people rise or the Army should act in a revolutionary manner." Efforts in the past year to seek support in India and Afghanistan cast no credit on the party and suggest that some of its leaders were short on realism.

Her announcement in April—which was widely unpopular in Pakistan—that she would be willing to talk with the Karmal regime and send the Afghan refugees home was seen as a signal to the Soviets that she would be more accommodating to their aims in Afghanistan. About the same time, the PPP high command agreed to sanction an effort by the Bhutto sons—Murtaza Ali and Shahnawaz—to set up an anti-Zia movement in Kabul.

The activities of the Bhutto sons—which must have at least the acquiescence of Soviet and Afghan authorities—are a potential embarrassment to the PPP.

Murtaza and his entourage—a collection of political exiles and former Army officers loyal to Bhutto—reportedly have organized a guerrilla force called the People's Liberation Army and may be receiving material aid from Syria and Libya. Murtaza Bhutto claims that the PLA operates from Pakistani tribal territory and has conducted successful sabotage operations against Army, paramilitary, and communications targets. Moderates in the PPP believe the Bhutto brothers have gone beyond the intent of their mission

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There are indications that the PPP is considering a more active opposition to Zia. Nusrat Bhutto has relaxed restrictions on PPP contracts with other opposition parties and softened her condition for PPP participation in a broad opposition alliance. The parties are negotiating a set of principles to guide a united struggle for the restoration of parliamentary government.

Although a credible opposition front has not yet formally announced itself, representatives of all major political groups, including the PPP, met in late November at a Lahore mosque to make the following demands: complete restoration of the 1973 constitution; the immediate setting of a date for parliamentary elections; the lifting of the ban on political parties; the ending of martial law; and the establishment of an all-party national government to deal with threats from India and the Soviets.

At the same time the party's left wing—led by Sheikh Rashid, a Punjabi lawyer with contacts among peasant organizations, and Mairaj Mohammad Khan, a Karachi labor leader with strong links to radical student and Baluch groups—has received the party high command's permission to broaden its contacts with labor, student, lawyers', and women's organizations. The PPP left plans to press such groups into clashes with the government, hoping to force the martial law authorities either to concede the streets—after which the PPP left can emerge in its own right—or to engage in violent actions that they believe will unify the opposition and strengthen the role of the left. The PPP moderates probably have agreed to the plan because they believe that increasing pressure from below will force Zia into meaningful negotiations with them.

The decision to form an opposition united front probably reflects a multiplicity of converging hopes and fears on the part of the opposition. There is, on the one hand, the sense of weakness and exposure felt by most opposition leaders and parties and the worry that Zia and the generals will—like Ayub Khan in 1959—use a referendum to bring in a centralized system of government in which they will have no place. Regional parties

are concerned that Zia's call for establishing local bodies in the tribal areas of Baluchistan and the Northwest Frontier Province means a strengthening of the center's policy of dealing directly with tribes at the local level. On the other hand, there is comfort in numbers and a hope that a united opposition will force the regime to negotiate with them or, failing that, that a referendum on Islamization will provide an opportunity to organize a countrywide boycott as a vote of no confidence in the Zia regime.

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By itself, the emergence of an opposition alliance is not especially ominous for the Zia regime. The diverse interests and competing personalities among the opposition groups offer many opportunities for a shrewd ruler to divide and rule. The development is one that cannot be ignored, however, particularly given the participation of the PPP. At the moment Zia rules through a negative consensus and could in a variety of situations—economic downturn, sectarian disturbances, costly Soviet-Afghan incursions—lose the political initiative to the opposition. At the very least, this development means that Zia will have to find a way to revive the flagging support of those groups that originally supported the coup against Bhutto.

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The Economy

Zia's political foothold has been strengthened by a turnaround in the economy. Good crops, strong export growth, and several key economic policy reforms enabled the economy to grow 6 percent in the fiscal year ending 30 June 1980 for the third consecutive year—a marked recovery from the stagnant years of the mid-1970s. At the same time Zia has used heightened Western concern about Pakistan's security to line up sufficient external financing to cover his country's chronic foreign payments gap.

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Pakistan's balance-of-payments problem is much improved since the fall of 1979 when Islamabad threatened to default on its debts. Since last June Islamabad has been able to gain economic aid and balance-of-payments financing that could amount to as much as \$2.5 billion. This would include a record three-year \$1.7 billion International Monetary Fund credit and aid from the Persian Gulf states—mainly Saudi Arabia—that could total \$1-1.5 billion.

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The domestic economy showed encouraging resilience last year as manufacturing rebounded for the first time since Zia took power. More importantly, a favorable year in agriculture yielded a record 15-million-ton production of foodgrains—largely wheat and rice. Cotton production also recovered because of high world prices and favorable weather. Commodity exports, led mainly by rice, cotton, and textiles, increased to a record \$2.4 billion. Remittances from Pakistani workers employed abroad continued to grow reaching \$1.8 billion in the fiscal year ending 30 June 1980.

generated wealth does not filter down or if Pakistan runs into serious economic difficulties, social tensions would escalate rapidly—as happened during the later Ayub years. One safety valve in the 1970s has been the boom in the Persian Gulf which provided alternative employment opportunities to Pakistanis of all walks of life. The slowing growth of the market for Pakistani labor and professional skills, and the possible adverse effect on the return flow of remittances would compound the economic problems Zia must deal with in the next few years.

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The thrust of Zia's economic policy since taking power has been to undo the damage of Bhutto's programs, which emphasized nationalization of key industries and an expanded role of the public sector. One of Zia's first moves in 1977, for example, was to denationalize small-scale agricultural and industrial processing facilities. Since then, amendments to the constitution providing safeguards to private industry against arbitrary state takeover, widening the scope of industries open to the private sector, and new investment incentives, have been introduced to improve the investment climate. In agriculture, Islamabad has stepped up its price support and grain procurement programs.

Pakistan's Military Capabilities

One of Zia's primary concerns is the state of Pakistan's armed forces, which are far from adequate for the country's security needs. Its armed forces are well-trained and number some 450,000 men, but its weapon systems are mostly outdated and are inferior to those of India in both quantity and quality. As a defensive force, the Pakistani Army could hold out against the Indians for no more than a few weeks. Pakistan's ground forces, less than half the size of India's, have little flexibility to defend in depth or redeploy reserves. Even if Pakistani forces were to assume the military initiative, their logistic system would be hard pressed to support prolonged operations on foreign soil. Shortages of modern tanks, armored personnel carriers, and self-propelled artillery, coupled with difficulties in maintaining aging equipment, would restrict Pakistan's mobility and firepower.

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Despite the progress in recent years, the economy still faces many intractable problems. Rapid population growth, widespread rural and urban poverty, financial constraints limiting needed infrastructure expenditures, and high dependence on oil imports are all factors restraining sustained economic growth. Private foreign and domestic investment remains at low levels of past years, and business confidence is being further eroded by the Soviet threat from Afghanistan and concerns about Pakistan's internal stability. In addition, under performance conditions required by the IMF, Zia has agreed to narrow Pakistan's annual budget deficit and gradually reduce the government's massive subsidy program on sensitive items such as wheat and fertilizer. The effect of these moves on price levels, particularly in urban areas, could be politically damaging and will test Zia's mettle to carry out needed economic reforms despite possible political repercussions.

The presence of large numbers of Soviet combat troops in Afghanistan and the Afghan insurgents' use of Pakistani territory as a safe haven have increased the likelihood of confrontation along Pakistan's western border. Although Pakistani forces there are relatively small in number and lightly armed, they enjoy one major advantage. Rugged terrain along the northern two-thirds of the western frontier from where most insurgent groups operate against Soviet-Afghan forces would dictate that any major ground force (more than a battalion or so) use the roads through a few key passes. Pakistani ground defenses, which have been improved since last summer, could make the cost of such an incursion exceedingly high. Battalion-sized or smaller raids by infantry or air assault units, however, might be conducted for limited objectives without encountering Pakistani strongpoints. Pakistan's lightly armed paramilitary forces, augmented by some regu-

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Not the least of the problems confronting the Zia government is rising expectations. While Pakistan remains one of the world's poorest countries, if newly

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lar Army troops, however, appear adequate to counter the kind of small Soviet-Afghan incursions that have occurred so far [redacted]

The capabilities of Pakistan's other services also are limited. Because its air defense system relies principally on older model Mirages and MIG-19s, Pakistan would have difficulty defending its airspace from a major air attack by India or the USSR. Pakistan's few Crotale short-range surface-to-air missiles have been deployed at several major air bases, leaving the urban areas with no missile defenses. Air Force capabilities also are restricted, more by the quality of equipment than the quality of personnel. Most of Pakistan's aircraft are MIG-19s, which compare unfavorably with India's MIG-21 bis, Jaguar, and recently acquired MIG-23 aircraft. The Navy is small, and its major surface combatants—mainly of World War II vintage—are in poor condition and require considerable maintenance. On the other hand, Pakistan's submarine force is on a par with India's. [redacted]

Since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in late 1979, the Pakistanis, who have always been suspicious of India and its close ties with the USSR, have become more concerned over what they perceive as Soviet encirclement. During 1980, two developments increased Pakistani apprehensions. The first was the signing of the Indo-Soviet arms agreement—the largest such contract ever concluded by India—whereby the Indian armed forces are to acquire large numbers of relatively modern weapons. The second development was President Brezhnev's visit to New Delhi in December to further cement Indo-Soviet relations and offer India additional arms. [redacted]

As India strengthens its military during the 1980s, Pakistan will undoubtedly step up its efforts to acquire more modern arms, but its options are limited. China, which is Pakistan's principal arms supplier, cannot provide weapons as advanced as those of the USSR. Moreover, no Western nation seems willing to provide the variety of weapons on terms comparable to those that the Soviets are giving India. Even if such equipment and terms were available, Pakistan could not match Indian purchases weapon for weapon because of its smaller economy and limited foreign exchange holdings. Finally, financing arms purchases through loans from Arab oil-producing states has often proven

difficult in the past and would only partially offset the imbalance. [redacted]

With dismal prospects for redressing the current military imbalance, Pakistan may intensify its efforts to develop nuclear weapons. Such actions, however, would probably cause India to resume its nuclear weapons development program and would produce further instability in South Asia. [redacted]

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Foreign Relations

One of the reasons for Zia's ability to hang on has been the overriding primacy of foreign problems and the dampening effect this has had on the domestic opposition. External threats have never been so complex or ominous as they are today as Pakistan searches for a way to maintain its national security in a regional environment dangerously destabilized by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Pakistan now believes it must look two ways at once—northwest to a superpower bent on subjugating the traditional buffer state between Central and South Asia, and southeast to India, a historic enemy that Pakistan believes is implacably hostile to its existence and under Prime Minister Gandhi, a virtual ally of the Soviet Union. [redacted]

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Deeply distrustful of India, Pakistan has consistently believed it needs a relationship with a protecting power that will provide it with security guarantees and advanced weaponry. Since the effective collapse of the US-Pakistan alliance in 1965, when the United States cut off aid during the Indo-Pakistani war, China has played this role, giving Pakistan some of its best weapons and balancing off India. Under Prime Minister Bhutto, Pakistan maintained the relationship with Beijing, but also sought to strengthen its financial and security interests in the Muslim world while assuming some of the protective camouflage of nonalignment. Finally, it set about developing a nuclear weapons capability—the ultimate guarantor of its security against a nuclear-capable India—and could have sufficient fissile material for a nuclear explosive device by late 1981. These are policies that Zia has continued.

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The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the fall of the Shah in Iran have completely altered Pakistan's strategic situation and highlighted the inadequacy of these policies. The most gloomy prospect now, in the Paki-

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stani view, is Soviet-Indian collaboration to neutralize Pakistan—perhaps by a combination of external military pressure and meddling in Pakistan's potentially unstable domestic politics. Although there is a measure of paranoia in these fears, there is also some justification. Soviet pressure on Pakistan—manifested in diplomatic demarches, private contacts, and occasional crossborder military activity from Afghanistan—has been intense. In these circumstances the Pakistanis cannot be faulted for saying they expect a major Soviet-Afghan strike across the border at some point in the near future.

The Soviets have also been active, in varying degrees, in Pakistan's internal problems. This has included planting propaganda in vernacular newspapers, financing small Baluch and Sindhi separatist groups, and attempting to stir tensions between Afghan refugees and local populations.

there have been many rumors—none confirmed—of arms aid to Baluch insurgents. Finally, there are indications that the Soviets have planted misinformation on both sides of the India-Pakistan border about military buildups in Kashmir, clearly hoping to deflect Pakistan from its attention to Afghanistan.

Pakistan's relations with India have never been warm and have to be measured in degrees of greater or lesser antipathy. Relations improved to a tolerable level during the Janata period in India, but have declined since Prime Minister Gandhi was returned to power in early 1980 and the vexatious issues of communalism and Kashmir received new attention last fall. Pakistanis bitterly remember Gandhi's sponsorship of Bangladesh and believe she intends to complete the process of India's rise to regional dominance begun with the partition of Pakistan a decade ago. Even though Pakistanis are sharply critical of India's inability to see the threat posed by the Soviets in Afghanistan, their abiding distrust of India prevents them from moving a significant portion of the Army away from the Indian to the Afghanistan border. While it is highly unlikely that India would agree to act militarily against Pakistan in concert with the Soviets, Indo-Pakistani relations are inherently volatile, and Pakistan's pre-

monitions of Soviet-Indian collaboration—possibly in a political form—have only reinforced its siege mentality.

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In contrast to Pakistan's suspicions of India and the Soviet Union, its relations with Iran traditionally have been close. The two non-Arab Muslim states share many cultural similarities and—along with Turkey—strong security interests. They also have in common the need to control the restless Baluch tribes, whose extensive homeland is bisected by the Pakistan-Iran border. Relations between the two states flowered under the Shah, but have declined steadily since his fall—despite Zia's prompt endorsement of the Islamic revolution. Pakistan has been angered by the efforts of Iranian diplomats to further inflame unrest among Pakistan's Shia minority and by open calls in the Tehran media for the overthrow of the Zia regime. Pakistani leaders, including Foreign Minister Shahi, believe the Soviets are using leftists in Iran to drive a wedge between the former allies. They are deeply worried that the Soviets will fill, either directly or by proxy, any vacuum left if Iran disintegrates. They have given Iran some material aid in its war with Iraq, but are prevented from doing more by these fears as well as by their growing dependence on Arab opponents of Iran like Saudi Arabia.

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The deterioration of Pakistan's regional security situation has set off a continuing debate on foreign policy inside the Pakistani establishment and generated a new interest in restoring the US-Pakistan relationship. Many top military officers have asserted that the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan has created parallel Pakistan-US interests in the Persian Gulf area. They argue that only the United States has the means to defend Pakistan against Soviet military pressure and believe that the United States would, in the end, be forced to respond to major Soviet attack on Pakistan. Some senior officers (including Zia) who remember the halcyon days of the 1950s believe Pakistan must be prepared to defend the "backdoor" to the Gulf and allow the United States access to its ports and territories. In return, however, they require that the United States enter into an ironclad security agreement and provide enough advanced weaponry to make clear that Washington will stand behind Pakistan whether the threat arises from the Soviets or the Indians; and many

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of them question whether the United States has the ability or the will to make such commitments, particularly in the absence of a Soviet attack [redacted]

Other voices—some in the military, but especially in the Foreign Ministry and among the intelligentsia—argue that the United States has consistently proven an unreliable ally and as a declining power has neither the will nor the capability to stand up to the Soviets in the region. They do not believe that the United States will ever provide the kind of assurances fundamental to a close security relationship. This group has argued that the Afghan insurgency will gradually lose steam and that the United States will lose interest in Afghanistan, leaving Pakistan holding the bag. Included in that bag will be well over a million Pakhtun refugees and insurgents, who, if defeated in Afghanistan, may join with Pakistani frontiersmen to agitate for a Pakhtunistan inside Pakistan. This group concludes that Pakistan should keep its lines open to the Soviets with a view to reaching an eventual accommodation. [redacted]

This debate continues in Pakistan, but Zia, who makes the final decisions on foreign policy, is determined to reject Soviet aims in Afghanistan and to continue aiding the Muslim insurgents. He is intent on standing up to punitive incursions by Soviet and Afghan forces into Pakistan, but has agreed that bilateral channels to Moscow must remain open and that Pakistan should probe for any give in the Soviet position on a political solution for Afghanistan. Moreover, Zia has also permitted Foreign Minister Agha Shahi some room to maneuver in the Islamic Conference and in the United Nations, where Pakistan's diplomatic efforts consistently have been directed at bringing the Afghans and Soviets to the bargaining table. No ground is being given, however, on the demands of the Islamic Conference that the Babrak regime not be recognized and that the Soviets agree to withdraw from Afghanistan as a condition for a solution. [redacted]

The Pakistanis recently thought their policies had been vindicated and initially interpreted the New Year's Day offer by Soviet Ambassador Smirnov as a major "procedural breakthrough" because the Soviets seemed to be agreeing to talk under the aegis of the UN Secretary General and to have the Kabul regime present as representatives only of their party and not

the Afghan Government. Zia believed the Soviets were feeling isolated and needed to show flexibility on Afghanistan in order to dampen criticism at the Islamic summit and the nonaligned meeting and allowed Shahi to request the UN Secretary General to appoint a special representative as a first step toward negotiations. [redacted] 25X1

The eagerness of the Pakistani response suggests that the heavy diplomatic and propaganda pressure from Moscow has made Islamabad more receptive to signs of Soviet flexibility. Zia also may have been influenced by the impact on Pakistani public opinion of Brezhnev's visit to New Delhi in December. The visit—and reports of accelerated Soviet-Indian military cooperation—received major coverage in the Pakistan press and appears to have spurred opposition demands that the Army relinquish its political responsibilities and concentrate on its primary duty of national defense. Implicit in these demands is the suggestion that Pakistan cannot oppose both India and the Soviet Union and that the Army can get out of politics and face the "real enemy" if it comes to terms with Moscow. While there is no evidence of a decisive shift in public opinion on Afghanistan, the regime may be feeling under increased pressure at home. Zia's recent announcement that he will soon appoint a Federal Advisory Council may be another manifestation of domestic political pressure. [redacted] 25X1

Pakistan will take a firm line on Soviet troop withdrawal if talks—now stalled—ever take place. Islamabad is not prepared to begin negotiations based on Moscow's latest preconditions, which imply Pakistani recognition of the Babrak government. The senior military officers around Zia acquiesced in the decision to permit Shahi to hold an exploratory dialogue with Moscow—probably because they saw this as a way of relieving pressure on Pakistan—but it is highly doubtful that Zia and the generals would allow Shahi to make substantive concessions. They are skeptical that the Soviets want real negotiations and they do not believe the Soviets are ready to withdraw their troops from Afghanistan. [redacted] 25X1

An important calculation in the Zia regime's response to the recent Soviet ploy is its desire to demonstrate to the new US administration the pressure it is under and

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indicate the directions it will have to take if substantial military support from the West is not forthcoming. Zia has been disappointed by the US response to Pakistan's security needs since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and hopes that the new US administration will respond more positively. Although the Pakistanis probably have not focused on the precise nature of a new security relationship with the United States, they do not want a return to the limited alliance of the 1950s, which made Pakistan openly dependent on the United States and appeared to meet the West's needs more than Pakistan's. Any new treaty relationship not only would have to guarantee Pakistan's territorial integrity against both Soviet and Indian designs, but also be a more equal partnership. Pakistan would promise to hold the line against the Soviets—both militarily and politically—and may eventually offer the United States a variety of joint facilities on its territory in return for uninterrupted access to advanced weapons and aid in achieving greater defense self-sufficiency. Pakistan would press the United States to affirm that it would not abandon Pakistan or cut off military supplies in any future India-Pakistan confrontation. Anything less than this would be difficult to sell domestically. Islamabad might accept less than explicit security guarantees—allowing it to keep its non-aligned and Islamic credentials—provided advanced weapons were made available both directly and through the Saudis, who have promised major funding for Pakistan's arms purchases in return for Pakistani troop assistance in Saudi Arabia's defense. Pakistan would regard this as a "second-best" deal, but might find this kind of format more acceptable if it perceives major domestic opposition to a direct Pakistan-US alliance.

Prospects

Pakistan under Zia will continue to concentrate on foreign threats to its stability, while at home Zia's willingness to deal seriously with party leaders will probably depend on how much pressure the latter are able to apply.

Evidence that the opposition—including the PPP—is pulling together makes the emergence of a broader opposition more likely, though party leaders still face difficulties. On the right, religious enthusiasm aroused by the "Islamic revolution" in Iran has begun to wear

thin as Pakistanis perceive some of the consequences of rule by mullahs. At the other end of the political spectrum, as long as the economy continues to gain strength and the regime handles street demonstrations with moderation, the left—already burdened by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan—will have difficulty finding a "gut" issue around which to mobilize a broadly based opposition. The moderates will constantly test the wind. They will marshal whatever pressure they can to bring Zia into talks if he remains strong, but will attempt to ride a mass movement to power if he seems weak. It remains to be seen whether any of the opposition leaders are capable of pulling together all the numerous undercurrents in Pakistan and channeling them in one direction against the regime.

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Zia and the generals are interested in broadening the base of the regime, but not at the cost of the kind of concessions demanded by the more credible party leaders. The military leaders will try to avoid holding parliamentary elections, largely because they fear a PPP victory. The longer the military avoids elections and holds on to power, however, the greater the disaffection with its domination is likely to be and the stronger the appeal of the PPP. A referendum on Islamization may provide Zia with a way to give his regime a badly needed popular mandate, but it could also boomerang if the opposition succeeded in making Zia—not Islam—the issue and turning the exercise into a vote of no confidence. Thus far, the referendum is only a diffuse idea and not a promise, and in any case Zia would not hesitate to cancel any promised election if it seemed to be going against him.

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The Army would like to get out of day-to-day politics once the threats seem more manageable, but has not yet found an acceptable mechanism for relinquishing political authority. Zia does not have a detailed blueprint for reforming Pakistan and restructuring its political institutions, and it seems likely that he will continue his cautious search for workable solutions under the broader rubric of "Islamization." Having failed to start anything more promising, Zia may seize on the elected local bodies to build a superstructure of nonpartisan and indirectly elected bodies. Alternatively, he may try to undercut the parties—which he regards as an un-Islamic form of political

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expression—by appointing respected citizens to advisory councils at the provincial and national levels. It is doubtful that any of these efforts will weaken the major parties, and at some point Zia will have to deal with them. The PPP, some observers point out, is poorly organized and badly split, and a dose of political power might be just the thing to finish it off. Such a Machiavellian scenario would be a last resort for Zia, but it is not inconceivable that he would negotiate with the PPP leadership if he felt badly pressed [redacted]

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Although Zia's position has been relatively secure, he must be careful, however, not to lose touch with opinion in Pakistan or allow a sense of drift to take hold. His rule has yet to be seriously tested in the streets. Any serious outbreak of civil disorder, particularly if brought about by an opposition political movement, could mean Zia's replacement by a general who—like Yahya Khan in 1969—would agree to hold elections and return the country to parliamentary rule. This would probably bring about the accession of a PPP government that would substantially improve relations with Kabul and Moscow. [redacted]

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As long as Zia remains in power and as long as the Afghan insurgency remains active, however, Pakistan's policies toward Afghanistan and the Soviet Union are unlikely to change. Given the present level of Soviet forces in Afghanistan, Pakistan can contain Soviet-Afghan ground incursions with the forces it now maintains along its border with Afghanistan. The likelihood of air incursions, against which Pakistan's defenses are much weaker, are a continuing concern. The Pakistanis recognize that only the United States has the ability to match Soviet air power in the region. For this reason, as well as for broader strategic calculations and pro-Western sympathies in the military, Pakistan is likely to approach the new US administration about significantly strengthening Pakistan-US ties. If the Pakistanis find the United States unwilling to pay the stiff price they are asking, and if they find Soviet—and possibly Indian—pressure increasing while the Afghan insurgency subsides, then they will almost certainly find a way to acquiesce in the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. [redacted]

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